

Good afternoon,

There are a number of bills that are being considered that will dramatically reduce and potentially eliminate local control and decision making on land use. These bills, if passed, will forever and negatively change Connecticut. Our landforms have the potential to be decimated. This is a time when we should be protecting our land and working together to improve the environment.

We trust our towns and the elected officials who understand the strengths and needs of our towns. It is only at the local level that we are experiencing our government as the Founding Fathers envisioned. We have bipartisan cooperation locally.

There is no need for force and coercion, like the Coercive Acts of 1774. Limiting and reducing local control is similar to forbidding town meetings without approval. Continual oversight from the State and fear of lawsuits, if Towns are not doing as Hartford demands, certainly seems like intimidation and bullying, which are not permitted in other settings.

Affordability in CT is about jobs and our economy. It is about saving and revitalizing our cities. It is not about destroying open space and our natural resources.

These bills are not about helping all residents of CT; they are about politics and politicians, developers, lawsuits, and a reduction of our rights. Government by the people, closest to the people is most effective. We can be a strong and diverse State if we celebrate the differences of the 169 towns, not eliminate the beauty of our individuality. Perhaps a dusting off of a classic middle school read, *The Giver*, is warranted. We learn through Jonas and his story that Sameness does not work.

"Talent and employers are looking to locate in urban centers that have the density and the activity and the culture and the arts that make them an exciting place to be," said Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin. "Connecticut's old model of suburban office parks and bedroom communities is not what's attractive either to employees or employers today."

What Connecticut needs is a revitalization of our economy by bringing back industry, new jobs, and higher paying salaries through business-friendly public policy. Transit oriented development should be focused on revitalizing all of our cities, where housing stock and adequate public transportation and infrastructure already exists. Our cities and towns need to be infused with more trees and greenery to address the dearth of access to healthy open space – not destroy more raw land.

Vote NO on all the bills that use coercion and force for towns to adopt state-wide uniform zoning codes.

Sincerely,
Mary Connolly
Woodbury, CT

